

# Tweedmouth West First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122186
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	359184
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alison Thomson

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	145
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Cairns
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Anne Rutherford
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Osborne Road Berwick-upon-Tweed Northumberland TD15 2HS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01289 306151
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed six teachers and 11 lessons, and held meetings with the governors, staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work and analysed 58 questionnaires from parents and carers, 56 from pupils and 10 from staff. The team also looked at documents and policies including those relating to the safeguarding of pupils, information the school had collected about the pupils' progress and the school's records of its monitoring of the quality of teaching.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following;

- How good the current progress is in Years 3 and 4, particularly in mathematics.
- How effectively assessment is used to drive up attainment.
- How effective is the school's monitoring and evaluation at accelerating improvement, especially that of teaching and learning.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller- than -average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those who have a statement of special educational needs, is above average. The school has many awards including Healthy School status and Activemark for the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Since the previous inspection there have been considerable changes in staffing. Separate childcare provision shares the school site, but this is not managed by the governing body and was not included in this inspection.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Tweedmouth West provides a good standard of education in a very stimulating, caring environment. Parents and carers, pupils and staff are all most positive about the school. The school engages with parents and carers extremely well. Typical of many comments from parents and carers are, 'I am very happy that my child attends this school – he is a very happy and responsible child', and, 'This school should be praised for fostering and adopting a high sense of community and citizenship'.

Pupils' academic achievement is good and several aspects of their personal development are outstanding. In particular, pupils have a very keen sense of feeling safe, an excellent understanding of what it means to have a healthy lifestyle and they make an outstanding contribution to both their own and the wider community. These first-rate outcomes are underpinned by excellent care, guidance and support and an outstanding, exciting curriculum. One particularly successful and innovative feature of the curriculum is the introduction of a forest school type of education, where the extensive outdoor area enables purposeful learning to take place through the exploration of the natural world. Pupils are most enthusiastic about life at school and told us, 'learning is really fun here'.

Since the previous inspection, there have been many improvements, such as in attendance and in the progress the pupils make. Mathematics, an area of previous underachievement, is improving strongly, but attainment still lags behind that of reading and writing which are above average. The school has successfully introduced many strategies to bring about improvements in mathematics, but many of those are fairly recent and have not yet had time to show their full impact. Teaching has improved and is good, sometimes outstanding. However, at present there are times when it is only satisfactory, thus progress slows. Currently, the best practice in teaching is not shared well enough and observation of teaching does not focus clearly enough on learning or on previous areas for development.

Central to the improved success of the school is the school's leadership team. The headteacher leads and manages the school very effectively. Roles and responsibilities are delegated well and there is a real sense of the staff working towards a common goal of improvement and in wanting the best experiences for the pupils. The school works extremely well in partnership with others to achieve this, for example through sporting and creative partnership. Self-evaluation is accurate and rigorous and this, along with the many improvements that have occurred, means that the capacity for further improvement is good.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics, by:

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- - embedding the successful, recently introduced changes to the teaching of mathematics
- - ensuring that marking in mathematics is of a similar quality to that in English.
- Accelerate pupils' progress by making all teaching at least good in quality by:
  - - sharing better the best practice that exists in school already
  - - giving clear guidance to pupils so they can they can always tell if they are learning well in each of their activities
  - - ensuring that lesson observations always have a close focus on the pupils' learning and previous areas for development.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils make good progress, from starting points that are just below nationally expected levels at the beginning of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This degree of good progress includes those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils behave well and they thoroughly enjoy their education. This was apparent throughout the inspection – in assemblies, at break times and in lessons. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils were excited about helping Bluebird to place London landmarks on a giant grid, complete with shiny blue material representing the river Thames. Year 3 and 4 pupils cooperated well with each other to solve a series of real-life mathematical challenges, to help Farmer Jones work out how to divide his carrots to go to different supermarkets in the town.

Pupils' attainment is above average overall by the end of Year 4. It is even sometimes above average in Year 3. For example, one Year 3 pupil eloquently explained that green leaves contained more chlorophyll rather than carotene because they were still living and carried out photosynthesis.

Pupils' above average attendance and good behaviour impact well on their learning and only occasionally do they need to be reminded to keep on-task. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to take on responsibilities, such as helping to serve at lunchtime. These are much coveted posts and the members of the school council interview the applicants. Pupils enjoy growing their own vegetables and recently won a gold medal from a Britain in Bloom contest. Pupils are extremely well thought of in the local community and raise money for a variety of charities. The headteacher is justly proud that there is, 'hardly a dry eye in the house', when they sing Christmas carols, complete with sign language for deaf people, each year in church. Pupils' basic skills, including strong information and communication technology skills (ICT), prepare them well for their future. Year 1 have copies of brochures they prepared about the town on sale in the tourist information. Year 1 were also seen very effectively promoting healthy eating to their parents and carers during an assembly. When asked if there was anything that they might change about the school, one pupil said, 'We like it how it is right now, but sometimes the glues run out'.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

The impact of the outstanding curriculum is demonstrated by pupils' good and sometimes excellent personal qualities. Literacy, numeracy and ICT are skilfully woven into interesting activities, such as orienteering. Pupils in Year 2, for example, are skilful at using their maps to navigate from check-point to check-point. The many enrichment experiences allow pupils to have memorable experiences, from theatre trips to residential visits that boost their confidence and independence and help to enhance team spirit. The school is rightly proud of its outstanding care, guidance and support and its reputation as an inclusive school. Pupils are known well as individuals. There is a very warm and caring atmosphere in school and great importance is placed on providing sensitive support to all pupils, including those who are especially vulnerable. Pupils agree strongly that adults care about them and the vast majority of pupils and parents and carers agree that the school prepares the pupils well to move on to their next class or next school.

Good and occasionally outstanding teaching is characterised by interesting activities that are matched well to the needs of the different pupils. Lessons proceed at a good pace and teachers use questioning well to challenge the pupils and make them think. Pupils say, 'lessons are good because we get to do hard work'. For example, Year 4 pupils were preparing an information booklet about cancer and demonstrated a level of knowledge and maturity far beyond their years. Teachers usually assess pupils well throughout the lesson, but some pupils are unable to say how well they are learning as this has not been

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made clear to them. Therefore, learning and progress are not as good as they might be. Teachers' marking is usually clear and helpful, particularly so in literacy.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

One of the key strengths of the school is the cohesiveness and enthusiasm of the staff. The responses to the staff questionnaire clearly indicated that everyone feels valued and is very proud to work at the school. The headteacher, ably assisted by her deputy headteacher, has instilled a sense of common values and reflection among all the members of staff. There have been some changes in staffing and, although teaching and learning are monitored, this does not always focus clearly enough on learning or on the previous areas for development. Many of the middle leaders are relatively new in post, but it is clear that already their work is helping to have an impact, for example in raising attainment in mathematics. Many of the similar initiatives successfully employed to raise attainment in reading and writing, such as a whole-school focus on particular aspects, are also being employed to raise attainment in mathematics. Although it is early days to see the full impact of these, there are already signs that they are having a marked effect.

The school promotes good safeguarding procedures as part of the very high quality care. Leaders endeavour to ensure that equality of opportunity is good for all pupils, with discrimination not tolerated at all. Community cohesion is good, both in school and in the local community. The school is able to demonstrate that the pupils have a good understanding of faith, ethnicity and culture, particularly internationally, through its work with a school in Sierra Leone. It has developing links with a school of a different socio-economic and ethnic make-up in the United Kingdom. The school engages extremely well with parents and carers and listens and acts on their views and concerns well. Parents and carers have been involved in experiencing the Forest School and are very appreciative of the help given to them to help support their children's learning. For example, they welcomed the opportunity to find out about new methods involved in the teaching of mathematics. Governors are very knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They challenge the school well, but are not fully involved in evaluation at present.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start in Reception with a wide range of skills that varies from year- to- year. Overall, their skills are just below those expected, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Excellent induction procedures with parents, including home visits, help the children to settle quickly and get a confident and happy start to their school life. Most children play together well and are well behaved. They make good progress and enter Year 1 having reached above average expectations in most areas of learning, except in linking letters to sounds, which is below that expected. Children have a keen interest in helping others and were seen being expertly directed to pick words to form the sentence, 'The miners got out of the hole', on the very morning the Chilean miners were brought up to safety. The teacher also skilfully introduced elements of number and creative work into this activity.

Adults provide well for children's welfare. Children have a good understanding of what it means to have a healthy lifestyle and follow well-practised routines such as hand washing and tidying up. The outdoor space is organised well and enhances the children's physical development. Children enjoy hand painting and linking letters they have written to those pinned on a washing line. One child correctly remarked to the teacher, 'you've forgotten that one – it makes an 'ss' sound.' Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Adults regularly assess what the children know, understand and can do. The quality of these assessments has improved, but records are not as specifically related to age-related expectations in all areas as they might be. This means that the introduction of any relative underachievement into lesson planning is not as robust as it could be in terms of the next steps that the children need to take in their learning.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

About one half of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. Most are very positive about all aspects of the school. The vast majority agreed that their children enjoy school very much and that the school helps them to support their children's learning. The inspectors agreed with these views. A very small minority felt that their children were not making enough progress and that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. It may well be the case that some children could make better progress and this is one of the areas of development for the school. Inspectors followed up the concern about dealing with inappropriate behaviour and found behaviour to be good overall and that any misbehaviour was dealt with in a suitable way.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Tweedmouth West First School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 145 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	74	14	24	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	64	21	36	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	31	53	24	41	3	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	53	21	36	5	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	36	62	22	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	40	29	50	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	60	22	38	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	29	50	24	41	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	45	26	45	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	38	28	48	5	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	28	33	57	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	30	52	25	43	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	66	18	31	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



14 October 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Tweedmouth West First School, Berwick-upon-Tweed, TD15 2HS**

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing you learn. Yours is a good school where you develop well and achieve good results in your work.

You have a very happy, exciting environment where you feel very safe and have a very good understanding of being healthy. You behave well and contribute to your community in an excellent way. You told us that you enjoy school very much and particularly like your lessons outside. You also told us that you feel that the adults in school care about you a great deal and we agree with you. Your parents and carers told us that they are extremely happy with all aspects of the school and that they appreciate the help that the school gives them to help you with your learning.

We have asked your headteacher to help you to reach higher standards in mathematics by asking your teachers to continue to make the improvements that are already happening and to mark your books as well in mathematics as they do in English. We have asked your headteacher to make sure that your progress is as good as it can be by getting your teachers to share good ideas better and by asking your teachers to give you ways of being able to say how well you are learning. We would also like your headteacher and other leaders to focus more on how well you are learning and on previous areas for development when observing your lessons.

You can help by asking your teachers to make it clear to you, if you are unsure, how you can tell if you are doing a good job in each of your activities in class.

We would like to wish you all the best for the future and hope that you continue to enjoy being at school.

Yours sincerely

Dr Alison Thomson

Lead inspector

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